



United States Department of Agriculture  
Rural Development

## **Community Connect Awards – Pennsylvania**

### **2003 Grant Awards:**

**Western Pennsylvania Internet Access, Inc.**

**Shanksville, Pennsylvania**

**Grant Amount: \$281,617**

**Contact: Roy L. Fritz, Jr., 814-267-6311**

**County: Somerset**

Shanksville is a small community with 245 residents and a very limited infrastructure. The Shanksville-Stonycreek School District is comprised of three small municipalities; Shanksville Borough, Stonycreek Township, and Indian Lake Borough. Both directly and indirectly, students and residents of all three municipalities will benefit. The availability of broadband service will improve the school district's curriculum, provide professional development opportunities for teachers and improve instructional practices. Shanksville was thrust into the National scene September 11, 2001 when Flight 93 crashed near the town. There continues to be a growing number of people visiting the site and looking for information about what happened that day. The school district and Western PA Internet Access, Inc. tried to accommodate a live web-cast for the families of the Flight 93 heroes, but were unable to do so because of the very limited infrastructure. With this grant, a community center housed at the school district will give visitors and media personnel high-speed access only a few minutes for the crash site. In addition to the school system, the Shanksville Volunteer Fire Company and other public safety agencies will be participants in this project.